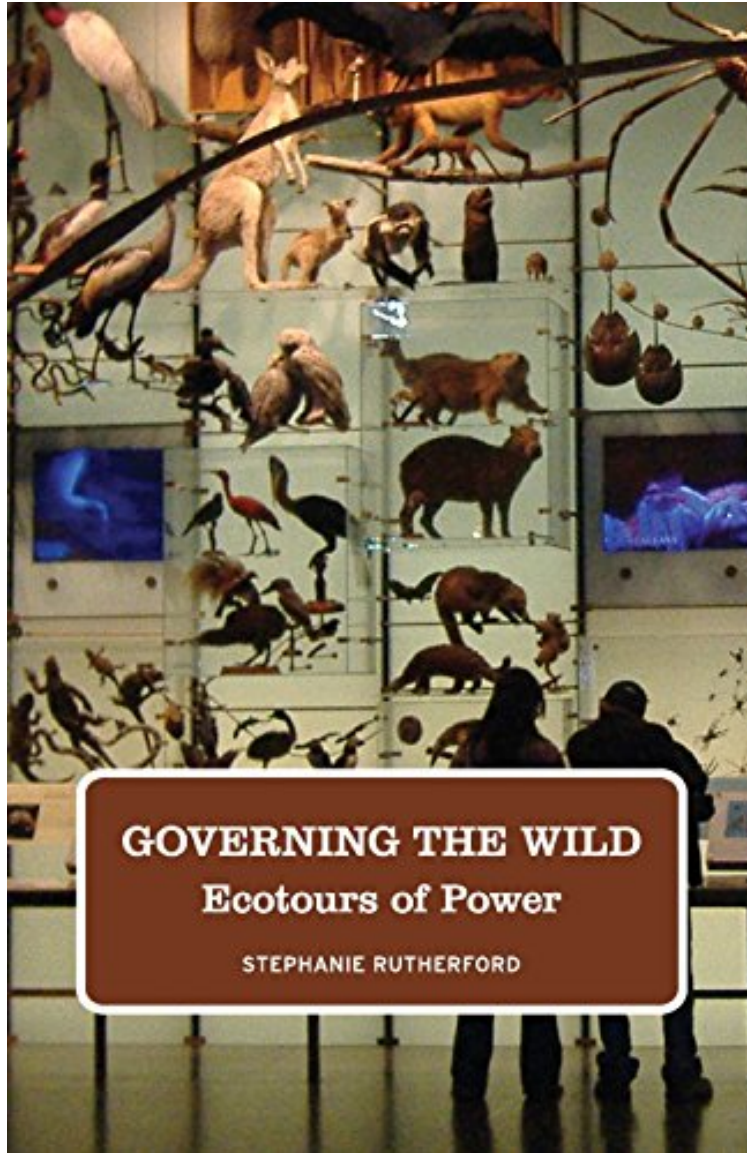


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## Governing the Wild: Ecotours of Power

*Stephanie Rutherford*

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**Stephanie Rutherford : Governing the Wild: Ecotours of Power** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Governing the Wild: Ecotours of Power:

Take four emblematic American scenes: the Hall of Biodiversity at the American Museum of Natural History in New York; Disney's Animal Kingdom theme park in Orlando; an ecotour of Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks;

the film *An Inconvenient Truth*. Other than expressing a common interest in the environment, they seem quite dissimilar. And yet, as *Governing the Wild* makes clear, these sites are all manifestations of green governmentality, each seeking to define and regulate our understanding, experience, and treatment of nature. Stephanie Rutherford shows how the museum presents a scientized assessment of global nature under threat; the Animal Kingdom demonstrates that a corporation can successfully organize a biopolitical project; the ecotour, operating as a school for a natural aesthetic sensibility, provides a visual grammar of pristine national nature; and the film offers a foothold on a moral way of encountering nature. But one very powerful force unites the disparate truths of nature produced through these sites, and that, Rutherford tells us, is their debt to nature's commodification. Rutherford's analysis reveals how each site integrates nature, power, and profit to make the buying and selling of nature critical to our understanding and rescuing of it. The combination, she argues, renders other ways of encountering nature particularly more radically environmental ways unthinkable.

"From Disney amusement centers and natural history museums to Al Gore's global warming spectacles and American national parks, Stephanie Rutherford traces out the historical contingencies behind green governmentality. Using this notion as her analytic of power, she develops an insightful analysis of how contemporary cultural politics and global markets help govern the wild and constitute the self in the U.S. through environmentally-driven consumer experiences." Timothy W. Luke, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University